CHAPTER XV.

The Psince with his English and Gascon army moved swiftly southward in battle array and Sir Nigel having reeruited his ranks with the two hundred members of the original White Company, from the woods near Montpexard, joined the army and received the honorable commission from the Prince, to push ahead into Spain and discover the location and strength the Spanish and French army under King Henry of Transtamere. The little band wound through the passes of Navarre and into the rugged land of

Sir Nigel had with him Sir William Felton. Sir Oliver Buttesthorn. old Sir Simon Burley, the Scotch knight errant, the Earl of Angus, and Sir Richard Causton, all accounted among the bravest knights in the army, together with sixty veteran men-at-arms, and three hundred and twenty archers. Spres mu-t had been sent out in the morning, and returned after night-fall to say that the King of Spain was encamped some fourteen miles off in the direction of Burgos, having with him twenty thousand horse and forty-five thousand foet. A dry-wood fire had been lit, and round this the leaders crouched the glare beating upon their rugged faces, while the hardy archers lounged and chatted amid the tethered horses, while they munched their seanty provisions,

For my part," said Sir Simon Burley. I am of the opinion that we have already done that which we have come For do we not now know where the king is, and how great a forlowing he hath, which was the end of our jour-

"True," answered Sir William Feiton, but I have come on this venture because it is a long time since I have broken a spear in war, and, certes, I shall not go back until I have run a course with some cavaller of Spain."

"I will not leave you. Sir William." refurned Sir Simon Burley: "and yet, as an old soldier and one who hath seen much of war, I cannot but think that it ill thing for four hundred men find themselves between an of sixty thousand on the one side and

said Sir Richard Causton "we earner for the honor of England go back without a blow struck." "Nor for the honor of Scotland.

elther." tried the Earl of Angus, Saint Paul! you have spoken very well," said Sir Nigel, "and I have always heard that there were very worth, gentlemen among the Scotgentlemen among the Scots. and five skirmishing to be had their border, Dethink you Sir Simon. that we have this news from the lips of common spies, who can scarce tell us as much of the enemy and of his forces as the prince would wish to

stumbling and groping through wild defiles and rugged alleys, following the guidance of a frightened peasant who was strapped by the wrist to Black Simon's stirrup-leather. With the early dawn they found themselves in a dark ravine, with others sloping away from It on either side, and the bare brown erage rising in long bleak terraces all round them.

"If It please you, fair lord," said Black Simon, this man hath misied us. and since there is no tree upon which we may hang him, it might be well to hurl him over yonder cliff."

The peasant, reading the soldier's meaning in his heree eyes and harsh accents dropped upon his knees, scream.

ing leadly for mercy.
"How comes it. dog?" asker Sir Will-lam Felton in Spanish, "Where is this camp to which you swore you would lead us?"

By the sweet Virgin! By the blessed Mother of Ged," cried the trembling peasant. I swear to you that in the inches as I have myself lost the path, "At the instant, there rose the scream of a hundred bugles, with the deep rolling of drums and the clashing of cymbals, all sounding together in one deafening uproar. Knights and archers sprang to arms, convince t

some great host was upon them; but the guide dropped upon his knees and thanked Heaven for its mercies. "We have found them caballeros:

he cried. This is their morning call." As he spoke he scrambled down one of the narrow ravines, and, climbing over a low ridge at the further end, he led them into a short valley with a stream purling down the centre of it. and a very thick growth of elder and box upon either side Pushing their way through the dense brushwood, they soked upon a scene which made their bent harder and their breath come faster.

In front of them lay a broad plain watered by two winding streams and covered with grass, stretching away to where, in the furthest distance, towers of Burgos bristled up against the light blue morning sky. 'Over all this vast meadow there lay a great city of tents-thousands upon thousands of them, laid out in streets and squares like a well-ordered town. High silken pavilions or solored marquees, shooting up from among the crowd of meandwellings, marked where the great lords and barons of Leon and Castile displayed their standards, while over white roofs, as far as eye could reach, the waving of ancients, pavons, pensils, and banderoles, with flash of gold and glow of colors, proclaimed that all the chivalry of Iberia were mustered in the plain beneath them. Far off, in the centre of the camp. huge palace of red and white silk, with the royal arms of Castile waving from the summit, announced that the gallant Henry lay there in the midst

As the English adventurers, peeping out from behind their brushwood screen, looked down upon this wendrous sight, they could see that the vast army in front of them was already afost. The rat pink light of the rising sun glitered upon the steel caps and breasties of dense masses of slingers and wmen, who drilled and marched in the spaces which had been left for their exercise. A thousand columns of ameke recked up into the pure morning air where the fargots were pited and the samp-kettles aircady of light horse galloped and swooped with swaying bodies and waving tavens, after the fushion which the Spansh had adopted from their Moerish en-All along by the sedgy banks of the rivers long lines of pages led asters' chargers down to water. while the knights themselves lounged a gasly-dressed groups about the doors of their pavilions, or rade out, with hely falcons upon their wrists and

their greyhounds behind them, in quest | and rode quietly forth from his conof quall of leveret.

The leaders sat amongst the boxwood, and took counsel together as to what they should do; while from below there surged up the buzz of voices, the shouting, the neighing of horses, and all the uprear of a great camp.

What beets it to wait?" said Sir "Let us ride down Feiton. upon their camp before they discover

'And so say L cried the Scottish earl; for they do not know that there is any enemy within thirty long leagues of them.

"For my part," said Sir Simon Burley. "I think that it is mudness. you cannot hope to rout this great ary; and where are you to go and what are you to do when they have turned upon you?" Nay," said Sir Nigel, "I have a plan

by which we may attempt some small deed upon them, and yet, by the help of God, may be able to draw off again; which, as Sir Simon Burley hath said, would be scarce possible in any other way.

"How then, Sir Nigel" asked several voices.

"We shall be here all day; for amid this brushwood it is ill for them to see Then when evening comes we shall sally out upon them and see if we may not gain some honorable advancement from them. We shall have nightfull to cover us when we draw off so that we may make our way back through the mountains. I would station a score of archers here in the pass, with all our pennons jutting forth from the rocks, and as many nakirs and drums

and bugies as we have with us, so that those who follow us in the fading ight, may think that the whole army of the prince is upon them, and fear to go further. What think you of my plan, Sir Simon ?"

"By my troth! I think very well of cried the prudent old commander. four hundred men must needs run a tilt against sixty thousand, I canno see how they can do it better or more

"And so say I." eriod Felton, heartly "But I wish the day were over, tor it will be an ill thing for us if they hance to light upon us."

The words were scarce out of his mouth when there came a ciatter ose stones, the sharp clink of trotting more, and a dark-faced cavalimounted upon a white horse, burst through the busines and rode swiitly down the valley from the end which was farthest from the Spanish camp-Lightly armed, with his vizor open ard a hawk perched upon his left wrishe looked about him with the carelons air of a man who is bent wholly aron pleasure, and unconstious of the possibility of danger. Suddenly, nowever, ared out at him from the brushwood With a cry of terror, he thrust his ques into his horse's sides, and dashed for the narrow opening of the gorge. For a moment it seemed as though he uld have renehed it, for he had trampled over or dashed aside the ar-chers who threw themselves in his way; but Hordie John seized him by the foot in his grasp of iron and dragged him from the saddle, while two others caught the frightened horse. Ho, ho," roared the great archer. How many cows wilt buy my mother,

I set thee free? Hush that bull's bellowing!" cried Sir Nigel impatiently. "Bring the man here. By St. Paul! it is not the first time that we have met; for, if I mistake not, it is Don Diego Aivarez, who was once at the prince's court. "It is indeed L" said the Spanish

knight. "I trust that I am now the risoner of some honorable knight or

You are the prisoner of the man who took you. Sir Diego," answered Sir Ni-gel. "And I may tell you that better nen than either you or I have found themselves before now prisoners in the hands of the archers of England." What ransom, then, does he de-

mand?' asked the Spaniard.
Big John scratched his red head and grinned in high delight when the question was propounded to him. Teli him, said he, 'that I shall have ten cows and a bull too, if it be but a litie one. Also a dress of blue sendall or mother and a red one for Joan; with five acres of pasture-land, two seythes, and a fine new grindstone. Likewise a small house, with stalls for the cows and thirty-six gallons of beer for the thirsty weather."

"Tut, tut," said Sir Nigel, laughing. 'All these things may be had for money; and I think, Don Diego, that five thousand crowns is not too much for so renowned a knight."
"It shall be duly paid him."

For some days we must keep you with us; and I must crave leave also to use your shield, your armor and our horse. I have need of it this day, but it shall be duly returned to you. Set guards, Aylward, with arrow on string, at either end of the pass; for it may happen that some other cavaliers may visit us ere the time be

All day the little band of Englishmen lay in the sheltered gorge, looking down upon the vast host of their unconscious enemies. The sun had sunk behind a cloud-bank in the west before Sir Nigel at last gave word that the men should resume their arms and have their horses ready. He had him-self thrown off his armor, and had dressed himself from head to foot in the harness of the captured Spaniard. "Sir William," said he, "it is my opin-

on to attempt a small deed, and I ask you therefore that you will lead this outfall upon the camp. For me, I will ride into their camp with my squire and two archers. I pray you to watch me, and to ride forth when I am come mong the tents. You will leave twenw men behind here, and as we planned his morning, and you will ride back here after you have ventured as far

ar seems mood to you."
"I will do as you order. Nigel; but what is that you propose to do?"
"You will see anon. and indeed it is but a triffing matter. Alleyne, you but a triffing matter. Alleyne, you will some with me, and lead a spare horse by the heids. I will have the two archers who rode with us through of stout heart. Let them ride behind us, and let them leave their hows here among the bushes for it is not my wish that they should know that we are Englishmen. Say no word to any whem we may meet, and, if any speak to you, pass on as though you heard te von pass on as though you

them not. So saying. Sir Nigel mounted the white horse of the Spanish cavaller,

ealment with his three companions behind him. Alleyne leading his maser's own steed by the bridle. So many jorse were sweeping hither and thither hat the small hand attracted little trot across the plain, they came as far is the camp without challenge or indrance. On and on they pushed Indrance. he dense swarms of horsemen and of footmen, until the huge royal pavilion stretched in front of them. They were close upon it when of a sudden there broke out a wild hubbub from a disushing from their tents, knights houted loudly for their squires, and there was mad turmoil on every hand

of hewildered men and plunging horses. it the royal tent a crowd of gorgeousy dressed servants can hither and of soldiers who were stilloned there tion of the alarm. A man-at-arms on other side of the doorway were the ole protectors of the royal dwelling. I have come for the king," whisper-

oust back with us or I must be

Alleyne and Aylward sprang from their orses, and flew at the two sentrice, who with words of love. were disarmed and beaten down in an inctant by so furious and unexpected an at-Sir Nigel dashed into the ent, and was followed by Hordle John as soon as the horses had been secured. From ithin came wild screamings and the clash f steel, and then the two emerged once sore, their swords and forearms redned with blood, while John bore ever is shoulder the senseless body of a man whose gray surcont, adorned with the Housnd towers of Castile, proclaimed him to filte-faced sewers and pages swarmed at heir heels, those behind pushing forwards. tille the foremost shrank back from the erry faces and recking weapons of the dventurers. The secucions body W75.44 brown across the spare borse, the four prang to their saddles, and away they brough the swarming court.

But confusion and disorder still reigned mong the Spaniards, for Sir William elten and his seen had swept through of their camp, leaving a long litter of the lend and dying to mark their course, I'nertain who were their attackers, and unto tell their English enemies from helr newly-arrived Breton allies, results twights rode wildly hither and thither in almiess fury. The mad turmoil, the mixture of races, and the fading light, were all in favor of the four who lone knew their own purpose among the while their pursuers fell back before the rolling of the English drums and blare trumpets, which seemed to proclaim that the whole army of the prince was about to emerge from the mountain

"By my soul! Nigel." cried Sir Oliver. what have we here?" "It is a prisoner whom I have taken

and in scoth, as he came from the royal ent and wears the royal arms upon his upon, I trust that he is the King Spain.

"The King of Spain" cried the compatrions, crowding round in amazement, "Nay, Sir Niget," said Felton, peering t the prisener through the uncertain ght. "I have twice seen Henry of ight. Transtamare, and certes this man in ac

any resembles him.
"Who are you, fellow?" he added in

Spanish, "and how is it that you dare to wear the arms of Castlle?"

The prisoner was but recovering the consciousness which had been squeezed from him by the grip of Hordie John.
"If it please you," he answered, "I and ine others are the body-squires of the king, and must ever wear his arms, so as to shield him from even such perils as have threatened him this night. king is at the tent of the brave Du Guesclin, where he will sup to night. But I a cabaliere of Aragon, Don Sancho Pene-losa, and, though I be no king, I am yet rendy to pay a fitting price for my ran-

"By Saint Paul! I will not touch your gold," cried Sir Nigel. "Go back to your master and give him greeting from Sir Nigel Loring of Twynham Castle, telling him that I had hoped to make his better acquaintance this night, and that, if I have disordered his tent, it was but in my engerness to know so famed and courteons a knight. Spur on, comrades! for we must cover many a league ere we can venture to light fire or to loosen girth.

It was a cold, bleak morning in the beginning of March, and the mist was drift-ing in dense rolling clouds through the passes of the Cantabrian mountains. The Company had passed the night in a sheltered gully. Here and there, through the dense haze which surrounded them, there loomed out huge pinnacies and jutting boulders of rock: while high above the sea of vapor there towered up one gigantle peak, with the pink glow of the early sun-shine upon its snow-capped head.

The camp was loud with laughter and merriment, for a messenger had ridden in from the prince with words of heart-stirring praise for what they had done, and with orders that they should still abide in the forefront of the army.

"The Lord Loring craves your attendance in his tent," said a young archer to Alleyne.

The squire found the knight seated upon cushion, with his legs crossed in front of him and a broad ribbon of parchment laid across his knees, over which he was

it came this morning by the prince's said he, "and was brought from England by Sir John Fallislee, is new come from Susses. Alleyne turned to the letter, and, as his eyes rested upon it, his face turned pale

and a cry of surprise and grief burst from "What then?" asked the knight, peering at him anxiously. "There is nought up at him anxiousty. "There is course amiss with the Lady Mary or with the Lady Mande?"
"It is my brother-my poor unhapper

brother!" cried Alleyne, with his hand to his brow. "He is dead." "By Saint Paul! I have never heard "By Saint Paul! I have never heard that he had shown so much love for you that you should mourn him so."
"Yet he was my brother—the only kith or kin that I had upon earth. Alas! alas! He has been slain—and sinin, I fear. amidst crime and violence."
"Ha!" said Sir Nigel. "Read on, I pray you."

and have thee in his holy keeping. The ner which waves over the ical? Lady Loring hath asked me, the priest, o set down in writing what bath betailen Calatrava' answered Peiton. at Twynham, and all that concerns the death of thy ill neighbor the Socman of "It marks the Knights of Santingo and illeins, and masteriess men. until they ere come to such a torce that they siew ad scattered the king's men was went also if I could but read it. Don Diego. gainst them. Then, coming forth from you know the arms of your own country, woods, they laid sage to thy castie, and who are they who have done us so and for two days they and us is and shot anuch honory" ard against us, with such numbers as sere a marvel to see. Yet the Lady Lor- cant eyes upon the deep and serried ranks ng held the place stoutly, and on the econd day the Seeman was slain by als own men, as some think so that we were delivered from their hands; for this day, ye fall by no mean hands for which praise be to all the saints, and nore especially to the holy Anselm, upon whose feast it came to pass. The Lady Lering and the Lady Maude, thy fair daughter, are in good health. May all saints preserve thee!"

'My fair lord," said Alleyne, with a flush on his weather-stained cheeks, small parties of French and Spanish unworthy as I am, I would give my and no little deed of arms come of it. heart's blood to serve her." Edricson," said the

By St. Paul! notice, and making its way at a gentle knight coldly, arching his eyebrows, "you the seas to witness." aim high in this matter. Our blood very old.

indrance. On and on the squire, and the squire, ast the endless lines of tents, amid the squire.

"And the Lady Mande is our single "And the Lady Mande is our single child. All our name and lands center upon

> "Alas! that I should say it, but I also am now the only Edrieson. "And why have I not heard this from

"Nay, my fair lord, say not so; for I know not whether your daughter loves me, and there is no pledge between us." Sir Nigel pendered for a few moments, and then burst out a-laughing. "By St. Paul!" said he. "I know not why I should mix in the matter; for I have ever found that the Lady Maude vas very well able of so great a heart and so high of enterhither in helpless parte for the guard mix in the matter; for I have ever found ad already ridden off in the direction to look to her own affairs. Since first prise, ion of the alarm. A man-at-arms on she could stamp her little foot, she hath shall be ever been able to get that for which she craved; and if she set her heart on thee, Allegue, and then on ". I do not think that this Spanish king, with his threescore thousand men, could hold you apart, Yet this I will say, that I would see you a full knight ere you go to my daughter I have ever said that a brave lance should wed her; and, by my soul! Edriesen, if God spare you, I think meet that you will acquit yourself well. But found enough of such trifles, speak of this matter when we see the plain steel harness, and a pink and white Sir William Felton, I pray you, and ask him to come hither, for it is time that we were marching. There is no pass at the further end of the valley, and it is a cannot which shielded the Spanis peritous place should an enemy come upon

Allexue delivered his message, and then wandered forth from the camp, for his mind was all in a whirl with this unexpected news, and with his talk with Sir Nigel. Sitting upon a rock, with his burning brow resting upon his hands, he thought of his brother, of their quarrel, hundered with loose reins and busy spurs of the Lady Maude in her bedraggied riding-dress, of the gray old castle, of the proud pale face in the armory, and of the him on his way. penniless, monk-bred lad, unknown and view, and another brave man had turned of Minstend, the head of an old stock, and Sir Nigel, meanwhile, had found a for the Lord of an estate which, if reduced man worthy of his steel, for his opponenfrom its former size, was still ample to was none other than Schastian Gomez, the preserve the dignit- of his family. Further, picked lance of the monkish Knights of he had become a man of experience was Santingo, who had won fame in a huncounted brave among men, had won the dred bloody combats with the Moors of esteem and confidence of her father, and Andalusia. So flerce was their meeting above all, has been listened to by him that their spears shivered up to the very when he told him the se-ret of his love, grasp, and the horses reared backwards. As to the gaining of knighthood, in such until it seemed that they must crash down stirring times it was no great matter for upon their riders. Yet with consummate a brave squire of gentle birth to aspire to horsemanship they both swung round in that honor. He would leave his bones a long curvet, and then plucking out their among these Spanish ravines, or he would swords they lashed at each other like two of men upon him.

griefs and his joys drifting swiftly over this mind like the shadow of clouds upon a sunlit mendow, when of a sudden he followed so swiftly upon each others that which came booming up to him through last coming thigh to thigh, they cast their the fog. He shouted an alarm to the arms ground each other and rolled off

horses grew loud upon the car. Suddenly from out the sea of mist came the sound of a neigh, followed by a long blast of a

By my faith, said Sir Mgel, smiling,

they sound the most ever us. But there is a hill in the center of the gorge upon which we might make our stand."
I marked it yester night," said Felton,
"and no better spot could be found for
our purpose, for it is very steep at the

bowk.

The whole Company, leading their horses, passed across to the small hill which bouned up from the mist. It was indeed admirably designed for defence, for sloped down in front, all jagged uider strewn, while it fell away be a sheer cliff of a hundred feet or more. On the summit was a small, uneven plateau, with a stretch across of a hundred paces, and a depth of half as much

Now order the ranks, and fling wide the onners, for our souls are God's and our soiles the king's, and our swords saint George and for England?" Sir Nigel had scarcely spoken when

mist seemed to thin in the valley, and to sared away into long ragged clouds which trailed from the edges of the cliffs, and the sun broke through. It gleamed and shimmered with dazzling brightness upon the armor and headpieces of a vast body horsemen who stretched across the barranca from one cliff to the other, and extended backwards until their rear-guard were far out upon the plain beyond. Line after line, and rank after rank, they chocked the neck of the valley with a long vista of tossing pennons, twinkling lances, waving plumes and streaming banderoles, while the curvets and gamtades of the chargers lent a constant mo-tion and shimmer to the glittering, many-colored mass. A yell of exultation, and a forest of waving steel through the length and breadth of their column, announced that they could at last see their entrapped enemies, while the swelling notes of a hundred bugles and drums, mixed with the front, the slingers had crept round upon clash of Moorish cymbals, broke forth into poring with frowning brews and pursed ips.

"It came this morning by the prince's liers of Spain to look upon this handful of men upon the hill, t. e thin lines of bowmen, the knots of knights and men-at-arms with armor rusted and discolored from long service, and to learn that these were indeed the seldiers whose fame and prowcas had been the camp-fire talk of every army in Christendom. Very still and slight ther stood, leaning upon their bows, while their leaders took counsel together while their leaders took counsel together in front of them. No clang of bugle rose from their stern rank, but in the center waved the leonards of England, on the right the ensign of their Company with the roses of Loring, and on the left over three score of Weish bowman, there floated the red banner of Merlin with the red-boar's heads of the Buttesthorns. Gravely and sedately they stood before the morning sun, waiting for the onslaught

"God be with thee," my honored lord, samong them. What is this goinen ban-"It is the ensign of the Knights of

death of the in height the bounds of the banner that the grand man rush thou us. Minstead. For when ye had left us, this I see by the banner that the grand man rush thou us. Might we not even now evil man gathered around him all outlaws. "You are right, for I can also see

them. There is much Spanish biazonry

fue Spanish prisoner looked with exulof his countrymen.

"By Saint James" he said, "if ye fail the flower of the army of Castile ride under the banner of Don Tello, with the chivalry of Asturias, Toledo, Leon, Cordova, Galicia and Seville and the knights of France and Aragon. If you will take my rede, you will come to a composiwith them, for they will give you such terms as you have given me."
"Nay, by Saint Paul, it were pity if

love your daughter, the Lady Maude; and, so many brave men, were drawn together Ha William, they advance upon us, and by and thrice it sank away, echoing and remy soul it is a sight worth coming over

As he spoke the two wings of the Spanish host, consisting of the Knights of 'And mine also is very old," answered Calatrava on the one side and of Santiago on the other , came swooping swiftly down the valley, while the main body followed more slowly behind. The vanguard halted a long bow-shot from the hill, and with waving spears and vaunting shouts challenged their enemies to come forth, while and war-cries and all the wild tumuit you before. Alleyne? In south, I think glittering ranks, walked their horses slowtwo cavaliers, pricking forward from the ly between the two arrays with targets braced and lances in rest like the challengers in a tourney.

"By Saint Paul!" cried Str Nigel, with his eye glowing like an ember, "these appear to be two very worthy and debo nair gentlemen. I do not call to mind We have our horses, Sir William shall be not relieve them of any vow which they may have upon their souls?"

Felton's reply was to bound upon his charger, and to urge it down the slepe. while Sir Nigel followed not three spear's lengths behind him. It was a rugged course, rocky and uneven, yet the knights, choosing their men, dashed on wards at the top of their speed, while the gallant Spaniards flew as swiftly to them. The one to whom Felton found himself opposed was a tall stripling for we have our with a stag's head upon his shield, while work before as, and it will be time to Sir Nigel's man was broad and squat, with white cliffs of England once more. Go to torse bound round his belinet. The first struck Felton on the target with such force as to split it from side to side, enmail which shielded the Spaniard's thront, and he fell, screaming hoursely, to the ground. Carried away by the heat and madness of fight, the English knight never drew rein, but charged straight on into the array of the Knights of Calatrava. time the silent ranks upon the hill could see a swiri-and eddy deep down in the heart of the Spanish column. circle of renring chargers and flashing blades. Here and there tossed the white plume of the English belinet, rising and falling like the foam upon a wave, inst flery words with which she had sped the flerce gleam and sparkle ever circling from on his way. Then he was but a

o some deed which would call the eyes tusty smiths hammering upon their anvil.

The chargers spun round each others, bitalleyne was still seated on the rock, his ing and striking, while the two blades ame conscious of a low, deep sound the eye could not follow them, until at their anddles to the ground. The heavier "It is a great body of horse," said Sir William Felton, "and they are riding very and pinning him down beseath him raised his sword to siny him, while a shout of dense fog wreath, amidst a silence so profound that the dripping of the water from the rocks and the breathly water even as his arm quivered before descend-ing, the Spaniard gave a shudder, and stiffening himself, rolled heavily over upon his side, with the blood gushing from arm-pit and from the slit of his vizor. Nigel sprang to his feet with his bloody dagger in his left hand and gazed down upon his adversary, but the fatal and sudden stab in the vital spot, which the Spaniard had exposed by raising his arm. had proved instantly mortal. The Eng-lishman leaped upon his horse and made for the hill, at the very instant that a yell of rage from a thousand voices and the clang of a score of bugles announced the Spanish onset.

CHAPTER XVII.

But the islanders were ready and eager for the encounter. With feet firmly planted, their sleeves rolled back to give free play to their muscles, their long rellow how-staves in their left hands, and their quivers sinng to the front, they had waited in the four-deep harrow formation which gave strength to their array, and yet permitted every man to draw his arrow freely without harm to those in front.

On swept the Spaniards, over the level and up to the slope, ere they met the blinding storm of the English arrows. Down went the whole ranks in a whirl of mad confusion, horses plunging and kicking, bewildered men falling, rising staggering on or back, while ever new lines of horsemen came spurring through the gaps and urged their chargers up the fatal slope. All around him, Afleyne could hear the stern, short orders of the masterbowmen, while the air was filled with the keen twanging of the strings and the swish and patter of the shafts, ilight across the foot of the hill there had sprung up a long wall of struggling horses and stricken men, which ever grew and heightened as fresh squadrous poured on the attack. So for five long minutes the gallant horsemen of Spain and of France strove ever and again to force a passage until the low walling note of a bugle called them back, and they rode slowly out of how-shot, leaving their best and their bravest in the ghastly, blood-mottled heap

behind them. But there was little rest for the victors Whilst the knights had charged them in the cliffs and behind the outlying rocks. A storm of stones broke suddenly the defenders, who, drawn up in lin upon the exposed summit, offered a fair mark to their hidden foes, Johnston, the teen of his bowmen and six of the men-nt-arms were struck down at the same nt-arms were struck down at the same and the three stood looking down into moment. The others law on their faces to the rocky ravine which lay a hundred and avoid the deadly hall, while at each side of fifty feet beneath them. the plateau a fringe of bowmen exchanged

is: of their formen.

"By Saint Paul," said Sir Nigel, gazing courage, and great hardiness, and it valley?"

with puckered eye down the valley, "there grieves me that he should have come by "I see "Were such a hurt."

"Nigelf" cried Sir Simon ituricy, hurry ing up with consecution upon its face Ayiward tens me that there are not ien score arrows ical in all their siccites, see: they are springing from their norses, and cutting their somerets that they had

"My soul wail retreat from my body am, and here I have, want and gives me trought to lift a refered.

"And so say 1: savated Sir Oliver, throwing his mace high mee the sir and atening it again by the handle.

To your arms, mea. tries Sir Niget, Shoot while you may and then out sword, and let us live or use together; Then uprose from the had in the rugged 'materian voticy a sound such as und not

seen heard in these parts outere, nor was again, until the streams which rappled amid the rocks has seen frozen by over your hundred wanters and thawen by as many returning springs, Deep and full and strong it thundered down the ravine, the fierce battle-call of a warrior race, the iast stern welcome to who so should join with them in that world-old game where the stake is death. Thrice it swelled forth verberating amidst the crags. Then, with set faces, the Company rose up among the storm of stones, and looked down upon the thousands who sped swiftly up the slope against them. Horse and spear had been set aside, but on foot, with sword and battle-axe, their broad shields slung in front of them, the chivalry of Spain rushed to the attack.

And now arose a struggle so fell, so long,

so evenly sustained, that even now the

memory of it is handed down amongst the Calabrian mountaineers, and the ill-omen-ed knoll is still pointed out by fathers to their children as the "Altura de los Ingiewhere the men from across the seas fought the great fight with the knights of the south. The last arrow was quickly shot, nor could the slingers harl tones, so close were friend and foe. From side to side stretched the thin line of the English, lightly armed and quick-footed, while against it stormed and raged the pressing throng of flery Spaniards and of gallant Bretons. The clink of crossing sword-blades, the duil thudding of heavy blows, the ponting and gasping of weary and wounded men, all rose together in a wild, long-drawn note, which swelled upwards to the ears of the wondering peasants who looked down from the edges of the cliffs upon the swaying turmed of the battle beneath them. Back and for ward reeled the leopard banner, now borne up the slope by the rush and borne up the slope by the r weight of the onslaught, now downwards again as Sir Nigel, Buriey and Black Simon, with their veteras menat-arms, flung themselves madly into the fray. Alleyne, at his lord's right hand, found himself swept hither and thither in the desperate struggle, exchanging savage thrusts one instant with a Spanish cava-Her, and the next torn away by the whirl of men and dashed up against some new antagonist. To the right Sir Oliver, Avi ward, Hordle John, and the bowmen the Company fought furiously against the morkish Knights of Santiago, who were led up the hill by their prior-a great-deepchested man, who were a brown monastic habit over his suit of mail. Three archers he slew in three giant strokes, but Si Oliver flung his arms round him, and the two, staggering and straining, recled back wards and fell, locked in each other s grasp, over the edge of the steep diff which flanked the hill. In vain his knight, stormed and rayed against the this which marred their path; the sword Aylward and the great axe of John cleans ed in the forefront of the battle and hour jugged pieces of rock, hurled by strong arms of the bowmen, crashed and burtled amid their ranks. Slowly gave back down the hill, the archers still hanging upon their skirts, with a long mark the course which they had tak At the same instant the Welshmen upon the left, led on by the Scatch on charged out from among the rocks sheltered them, and by the fury of outfall had driven the Spaniards in of them in headlong flight down the In the centre only things seemed to be going ill with the defenders. Black Since was down dying, as he would wish to have died, like a grim old welf in its lair with a ring of his siain around him. Twice Sir Nigel had been overborne, and twice Al-Niget had been oversome, and twice Ar-leyne had fought over him until he had singgered to his feet once more. Buriey lay senseless, stunned by a blow from a mace, and half of the men-at-arms lay littered upon the ground around him. Sir Nigel's shield was broken, his crest skorn. his armor cut and smashed, and the vizor tern from his belinet; yet he sprang hither and thither with light foot and ready hand, engaging two Bretons and a Span-iard at the same instant thrusting, stoop-ing, dashing in, springing out—while Al-leyne still fought by his side, stemming with a handful of men the fierce tide which surged up against them. Yet it would have fared ill with them had not the archers from either side closed in upon the flanks of the attackers, and pressed them very slewly and foot by foot down the long slope, until they were on the plain once more, where their fellows were already rallying for a fresh assault.

But terrible indeed was the cost at which the last had been repelled. Of the three hundred and seventy men who had held the crest, one hundred and seventytwo were left standing, many of whom were sorely wounded and weak from loss of blood. Sir Oliver Buttesthorn, Sir Richard Causton, Sir Simon Burley, Black Simon, Johnston, a hundred and fifty archers, and forty-seven men-at-arms had failen, while the pitiless half of stones was alrendy whizzing and piping once more about their ears, threatening every instant to further reduce their numbers. Sir Nigel looked about him at his shat tered ranks, and his face flushed with a

"By St. Paul!" he cried, "I have fought in many a little bickering, but never one that I would be more loth to have missed than this. But you are wounded, Allegne?"
"It is nought," answered his squire, stanehing the blood which dripped from a sword-cut across his forehead.

"These gentlemen of Spain seem to be most courteous and worthy people. I see that they are already forming to continue this debate with us. Form up the bowmen two deep instead of four. By my faith: some very brave men have gone from among us. Aylward, you are a trusty soldier, for all that your shoulder has never felt accolade, nor your heels worn the gold spurs. Do you take charge of the right; I will hold the center, and you, my Lord of Angus, the left." "Ho! for Sir Samkin Aylward!" cried

a rough voice among the archers, and a rear of laughter greeted their new leader. "By my hilt:" said the old bowman. "I never thought to lead a wing in a strick-en field. Stand close, camarades, for, by these finger-bones! we must play the man this day. "Come hither, Alleyne," said Sir Nigel

walking back to the edge of the cliff which formed the rear of their position. "And you, Norbury," he continued, beckoning to the squire of Sir Oliver. also come here,"

The two squires hurried across to him, "The prince must hear of how things are with us," said the knight. "Anoth-

er onfall we may withstand, but they are many and we are few, so that the time must come when we can no longer form line across the bill. Yet if help were brought us we might hold the crest until it comes. See youder horses which stray among the rocks beneath us?"

"I see them my fair lord."
"And see youder path which winds along the hill upon the further end of the

"I see It."